

# LAKETIDES

*The newsletter for people interested in Wisconsin lakes*

*20th Year Anniversary Issue*

## Making Waves

### Recreational Boating in the '90s

**Volume 21, No. 1**  
**Winter 1996**

*A routine article in Lake Tides and a common topic in lake country is how do we deal with the increasing boating pressures on our lakes? We see a steady stream of boating newsletter and newspaper articles crossing our desk—stories bemoaning the crowding and chaos on the nation's waters. This past year's boating controversy got ink in Newsweek, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the Illinois North West Herald, the New York Times and Minocqua's Lakeland Times, just to name a few. With the growing interest in the lake community about "Recreational Use Conflict" (a great bureaucratic term for too many people arguing over how to use our waters), Lake Tides is embarking on a series of articles exploring recreational boating in America.*

#### Boat Bashing

Pleasure boating is an American passion. According to the U.S. Coast Guard, estimated recreational boating has grown from around 5.85 million boats in 1962 to more than 20 million today. Each year about 75 million people go boating. Basically boating is a safe form of recreation but there is a dark side to all this delight. Each year nearly 6,000 boats are involved in accidents resulting in \$25 million in property damage.

Let's look at another of America's favorite pastimes... comparing statistics—in this case, boating statistics. According to the Coast Guard there were a total of 6,906 recreational boating accidents for 1994—the most ever reported. The casualty data shows a record number of injuries at 4,084.

If we look closer we find that boating is actually getting safer. Coast Guard totals for the past nine years show the number of

registered boats increasing from 16.7 million in 1985 to about 20.6 million in 1994, an almost 18% increase over nine years. Records also show that fatalities have dropped nearly in half, from 1,116 in 1985 to 784 in 1994. The 784 fatalities for 1994 are the fewest ever recorded for a given year.

Auto accidents claimed 40,676 lives in 1994, a rate of about 15.62 per 100,000 in population as compared to boating with a rate of 3.9 per 100,000 boats. Boating injuries, on the other hand, have almost doubled from 2,709 in 1985 to the 1994 high of 4,084. Boating agencies have routinely targeted a majority of their efforts in reducing fatalities and their causes. While this is working, new craft along with increasing numbers seem to be the reason for more non-fatal accidents. The Coast Guard and the American Red Cross estimate that only 10-15% of boating accidents are reported due to ignorance of the law or difficulty enforcing it.



**Wisconsin  
Lakes  
Partnership**



*In 80% of fatal accidents the actual cause of death is drowning. It seems that actually wearing your PFD might not be a bad idea.*

During 1994 in Wisconsin there were 175 reportable boating accidents involving 229 boats. These accidents accounted for \$384,594 in property damage, 21 fatalities and 100 injuries. A notable fact stands out—all 21 fatalities resulted from capsizing or falling overboard. None of the 21 victims were wearing personal flotation devices (PFD) and all of them drowned. Based on the accident reports it is believed that all 21 could have survived if they only would have been wearing a PFD. In 80% of fatal accidents nationally the actual cause of death was drowning. It seems that wearing your PFD might not be a bad idea.

In Wisconsin, during 1995 there were 16 fatal boating accidents, the lowest ever for

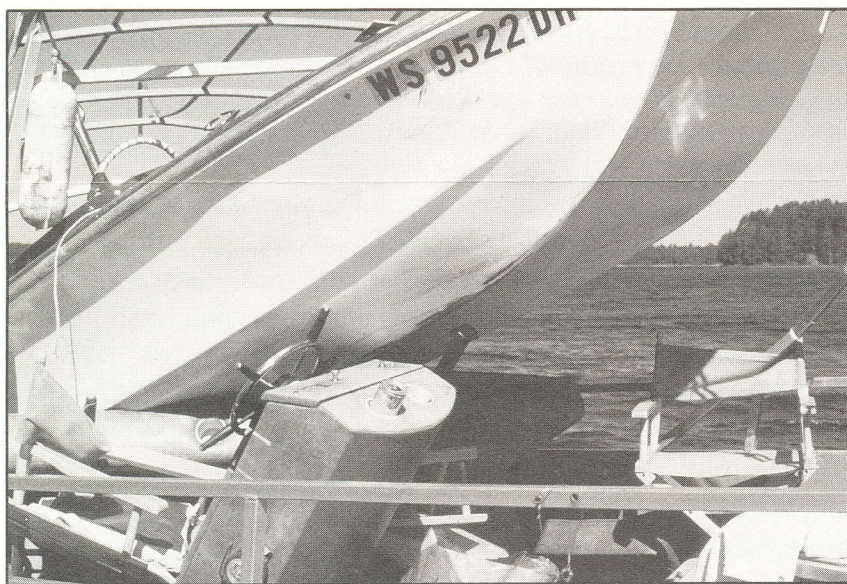
the state. We also had 227 non-fatal accidents reported, slightly higher than the 179 seven-year average.

### Accident Causes

According to the Coast Guard the vast majority of boating accidents are caused by the boat operator, not by the boat or environmental factors. The most common type of accident, both nationally and in Wisconsin, is collision with another vessel. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reports the top 5 causes of accidents in the state are:

- ★ Excessive speed
- ★ Operator inexperience
- ★ Inattentive operation
- ★ Alcohol use
- ★ Hazardous waters

*In the next issue of Lake Tides we will compare motor boating with personal watercraft (jet skis). Look at what you can do to be a safer boater and explore what other states are doing to deal with the growing use of our waterways.*



### You are required to report a boating accident when:

- There is loss of life due to the accident.
- Someone is injured and requires treatment beyond first aid.
- There is complete loss of the vessel or damage to the vessel and other property in excess of \$500.
- Any person on board a vessel disappears (under circumstances indicating death or injury).

If you have an accident, report it immediately to local law enforcement authorities. If you need assistance in determining who to call to report an accident in any state or territory, **call 1-800-368-5647.**



## Proposed Legislation Affects Lakes

Representatives Duwayne Johnsrud (R, Eastman), Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and Mike Powers (R, Albany), Chair of the Subcommittee on Water Quality, proposed new animal waste management and water quality protection legislation on December 12. The proposal contemplates major changes for current animal waste, nonpoint source pollution abatement and other water resource protection programs:

- ◆ Counties could withdraw from Shoreland Zoning including requirements for building setbacks, lot sizes and cutting vegetation, if they designate "Water Quality Management Areas" that meet DNR approval.
- ◆ The Priority Watershed and Priority Lakes programs are eliminated.
- ◆ More authority and responsibility for water quality protection programs are transferred from state government to county government.
- ◆ Lake Planning, Lake Management and similar grant programs are repealed and replaced by a single grant program where state agencies, local governments and private organizations would compete for water quality protection funding. Projects would require approval by the Land and Water Conservation Board. (A majority of board members are appointed by the Governor with advice and consent of the state Senate.)
- ◆ Each county could acquire a basic water quality grant to support at least one full time staff person.



Two public hearings have been held to date and two others are scheduled: January 12th in Monroe and January 22nd in Viroqua. For more details call Representatives Johnsrud (608/266-3534) or Powers (608/266-1192) about their proposed animal waste and water quality bill currently called **WLCS:0442/1**.

---

### WAL Establishes Youth Participation Fund

Until recently, youth had not been active participants in the Wisconsin Lakes Convention. This year the Wisconsin Association of Lakes has established the **"Adopt-A-Lake Youth Recognition and Participation Fund"** to ensure participation of youth in the Convention. Various school and other youth groups will share successful projects through posters and presentations.

"Many of these kids have devoted time after school, recess hours, and other personal time to work on their lakes projects. They've put in a lot of work and it would be a shame if they couldn't share them with others because of financial restrictions," one teacher pointed out. With your support, this fund will help pay for registration, travel and lodging costs for youth presenting at the Lakes Convention. A check-off box is included on the registration form.

### Lakes Needed for Eurasian Watermilfoil Study

Dr. Michael Bozek (UW-Stevens Point Fisheries Coop) in partnership with the WDNR has developed a project to use the Milfoil weevil (*Euhrychiopsis lecontei*) as an Eurasian Watermilfoil biological control agent. Dr. Bozek is seeking five to ten Wisconsin lakes willing to participate in the two-year study. A maximum of \$2,000 in local funding from each participating lake organization or local unit of government will be matched with \$30,000 of state funds for a total project budget of \$40,000. The results of the study will help determine whether the Milfoil weevil is a viable control agent in Wisconsin lakes.

A project kick-off and informational meeting has been scheduled for interested lake representatives on January 18, 1996 at 7:00 pm at the City Library in Whitewater, WI. Please contact Dan Helsel, DNR Southeast District at 414-263-8714 or Dr. Michael Bozek at 715-346-4023 for more information.





## Going Elsewhere to Swim

### *A lake lover learns to love its "weeds."*

*Submitted by Sarah  
Ainsworth Powley*

We didn't like to swim there. The waterfront at our summer cottage in northern Wisconsin was all muck, gravel and weeds. The green stalks of the dominant plant emerged from the water like straws at attention; the submerged portions were coated with slime.

We were squeamish about touching the stuff and recoiled at the thought of tangling our bodies in it when we swam. Every year, our parents cleared enough of the weed to quiet our complaints and create a convenient boundary for my brothers, my sister and me.

"Only as far as the weeds!" Mother said. We obeyed and swam safely within the limits of the stiff green spikes. But we still envied the people on the south shore who had inviting sand beaches, and we protested about the stones under our feet.

In response, Mother gave us seines and showed us how they worked. Determined to create a beach environment, we stood in the water for hours, filling cardboard boxes we had set on the dock with stones, leaves, and weeds we had pulled from the lake.

When the boxes were full, we loaded them into our boat. Mother rowed with us to the middle of the lake where we heaved the stones over the side and watched them sink.

How purposeful we felt.

But our shoreline was not intended to be an exposed sand beach. The weeds grew back and the stones washed in. The yearly clean-up was the task of Sisyphus, and we never did achieve the combed appearance of the southern shore.

When we became better swimmers, we lost interest in removing the stones and weeds. Mother took us to another part of the lake to swim, a place where deep water, a raft, and other children made us forget about the slippery weeds and sharp little stones along our portion of the shore.

Time restored our place to its natural state and delivered us to adulthood. Today, the shoreline at our cottage is characterized again by gravel, muck, and a healthy stand of the aquatic plant I now know as *Eleocharis acicularis*, or needle spike-rush. *Eleocharis* is a sedge, and like every botanical species, it has its particular

niche. In this case, the depth of the water, the gravel and the amount of muck are the determining factors in its growth.

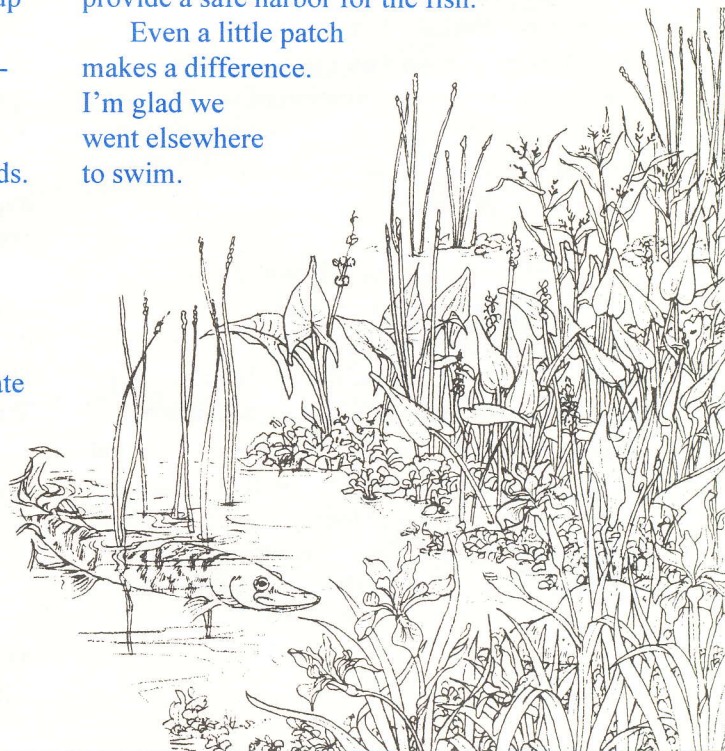
The spike-rush is a forest of stems firmly anchored in the sand and gravel. Other vegetation, floating by or falling from overhanging limbs, is trapped within the forest and settles on the bottom. The result is a dark and sheltered habitat, a tangled area that panfish use to rear their young.

The spike-rush produces oxygen, critical to all that lives in the water, and decomposing plant life trapped on the bottom provides nutrition for the micro-organisms that the panfish feed upon. Larger game fish hover nearby, attracted to the vegetation and to the smaller fish that hide within.

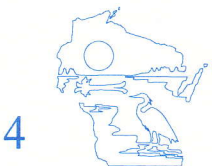
I remember the day my six-year-old sister, with a covey of other children milling around her, caught her first big bass right off the end of the dock. She was ecstatic; the rest of us, agog. But of course, the best fishing is near weed beds.

All this about *Eleocharis* I have learned as an adult. To my child's mind, the spike-rush was a blight on the landscape of the lake. I wanted then what I couldn't have and tried to make our shore something that it wasn't. In Greek, *Eleocharis* means "gracing the marsh." The spike-rush and other native plants that grace our woodland lakes sustain the life within the lakes, protect the shoreline, and provide a safe harbor for the fish.

Even a little patch makes a difference. I'm glad we went elsewhere to swim.



*Reprinted from the  
Christian Science  
Monitor, June 1995.*

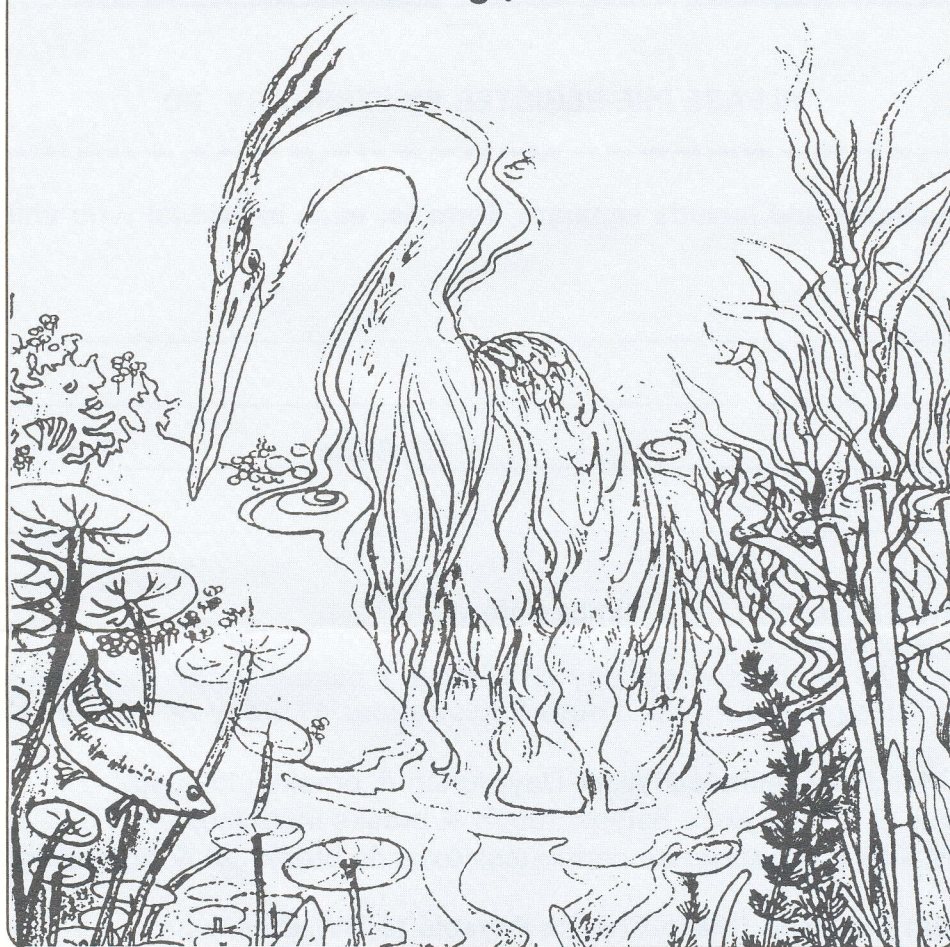




# Wisconsin Lakes Convention

March 7, 8, 9 - 1996, Stevens Point

## Through the Looking Glass: The Ecology of Lakes



**Sponsored by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership:**

Wisconsin Association of Lakes; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources;  
and University of Wisconsin-Extension, UW-Stevens Point

The 18th annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention will be bigger and better than ever. Thursday's special workday will answer your questions on private septic systems. Friday's keynote speaker is Gaylord Nelson—Wisconsin's senior statesman, founder of Earth Day and the Wilderness Society. George Meyer, Secretary of the DNR, will bring you up to date on the DNR's reorganization efforts and how it will effect your lake organization. A panel of top state legislators will provide an update on water issues and our state's strategies for solving them. Enjoy three days of instruction that will explore a host of critical and perplexing issues. Twenty-four workshops will cover subjects important to your lake community, including how to deal with recreational use conflicts, getting organized, mining, lake law, and much more... brought to you for your learning pleasure. For long-time lake leaders or brand new lake lovers, the 18th Lakes Convention is a must.



**Lodging:** Blocks of rooms are being held at the Stevens Point Holidome and Convention Center (1-800-922-7880 or 715-341-1340) until **February 15, 1996**. Rates are \$49/single; \$68/double; \$72/triple or \$76/quad. Ask for the Wisconsin Lakes Convention block. Other hotels nearby include: Super 8 (800-800-8000); Road Star Inn (800-445-4667); Comfort Suites (715-341-6000); Budgetel (800-428-3438); or contact the Chamber of Commerce at 715-344-1940 for additional lodging information or recreational opportunities.

**PLEASE PRE-REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 20**

Please duplicate and include separate form for each individual who will attend.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Lake \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

I have attended the Convention \_\_\_\_\_ times before.

**Registration Fees:** \$25 per person per day or \$60 for 1 person for all three days covers materials, workshops and designated meals. Youth Registration: \$15/day or \$35 for all 3 days.

\_\_\_\_\_ Thursday, March 7 (Technical Work-Day; lunch & breaks included)

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday, March 8 (Conference Begins; lunch & breaks included)

\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, March 9 (Conference continues; Awards breakfast & breaks included)

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Enclosed (Make Checks Payable to UW-Extension)

**Mail payment to:** Dorothy Snyder, UWEX-Lakes  
CNR, UW-Stevens Point  
2100 Main St.  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
Phone: 715/346-2116

☐ I would like to sponsor a youth participant by contributing \$15 to the WAL Youth Fund. Please include a separate check payable to **Wisconsin Association of Lakes**.

☐ My group would like a display table.

☐ My group would like to present a poster session. (We will contact you with more details.)



***Only eight weeks remain until the Wisconsin Lakes Convention in Stevens Point. Listed here are a few highlights for the 18th annual conference:***

### **Septic Situations**

One in four homes in the U.S. relies on some form of septic system. If you have ever had trouble with your septic system, want to know how it works, or have a better understanding of what's required to "meet code," Thursday's work day is for you. Experts from around the state will conduct an information-packed work day. Thursday will be a great opportunity to gather information on alternative technologies, the latest in research, local and state regulations, who's in charge and what's being done when it comes to private sewer systems.

### **Table Talk**

A new twist has been added to Friday's Convention luncheon. Each table will have a host/hostess who will lead a casual discussion on one of 62 different subjects ranging from canoe building to carp control. This is a great opportunity to make new friends and share your opinions in a relaxed atmosphere.

### **Poster Sessions**

Does your group have information or a project to share with other Convention participants? This year we will provide a poster session for those willing to share success stories or information about your lake community. Check the box on the registration form and we will send you more information and details.

## **Agenda**

### **Thursday, March 7**

#### **Technical Work-Day - Septic Situations**

8:00 am	<b>Registration</b>
9:00	Introduction - Onsite Basics
9:30	Environmental Implications
10:00	Documenting the Problem
10:45	Regional Implications
11:15	Local Regulation and Management
11:45	Lunch (included)
1:00 pm	State Regulation
1:30	New Technologies & Research
2:00	Case Study: Large Lake Sewering Project
2:30	Putting it All Together: Community Options
3:15	Panel Discussion: How does it apply to me? What can individuals or lake communities do?

7-8:00 pm      **Check-in for pre-registered Lakes Convention Attendees**

### **Friday, March 8**

#### **Wisconsin Lakes Convention Begins**

7:00 am	Exhibit Hall opens, Poster Session set-up, <b>Registration Begins</b>
8:30-9:30	Wisconsin Association of Lakes Annual Meeting
10:00 am	Convention begins: Welcome and Introduction
10:30	Keynote Address: Mr. Gaylord Nelson
11:15	Dept. of Natural Resources Reorganization - Sec. George Meyer
12:00	Table Talk Luncheon (included)
1:45-2:45	Concurrent Workshops (choose from 7 streams)
3:15-4:15	Concurrent Workshops (choose from 7 streams)
4:15-5:00	Poster presentations
4:30-7:30	Exhibitor's Social and WAL Silent Auction
7:30-9 pm	<b>Panel Discussion: The Future of Mining in Wisconsin--Do Mining and Water Mix?</b>

### **Saturday, March 9**

#### **Wisconsin Lakes Convention Continues/Self-Help Monitoring Workshop**

7-8:30 am	Lake Stewardship Awards Breakfast
10-12:30	Self-Help Monitoring Workshop
8:45-9:30	Concurrent Workshops (choose from 5 streams)
9:45-10:30	Concurrent Workshops (choose from 5 streams)
11-12:30	Legislative Panel to discuss current issues





## Description of Workshop Streams Friday, March 8 and Saturday, March 9

Twenty-four separate workshops will be held during four concurrent sessions on both Friday afternoon and Saturday morning this year. Workshops will again be presented in topic "streams." Feel free to follow all workshops in one stream, or move from stream to stream to gather information on many different topics. ***A complete listing of workshop titles and times will be sent with your registration confirmation.***

**The Long and Shallow of Aquatic Ecosystems** This stream will help you understand the components of a healthy lake ecology with an emphasis on the significance of our often misunderstood large shallow lakes.

**Wisconsin Lake Laws and Leaders** The policies, politics, and regulations that control how we can use our lakes or run our organizations can be difficult to understand. This stream will guide you around some of the pitfalls and help you make reliable choices when it comes to raising dollars or understanding water laws.

**At the Water's Edge** There is 500% more diversity of plants and animals in the area near the water's edge. Discover the excitement of life in the littoral zone as you gather information on how to improve the quality of your lake ecosystem while enjoying your property.

**Partnerships at Work—People and Lakes** Successful lake organizations are successful partners. Uncover methods to make organizing easier and ways to recruit and keep volunteers. Listen to youth share their projects in the lake community through the Adopt-A-Lake program.

**Making Waves** Recreational use conflict is a growing area of concern in the lake community. This stream offers a rare opportunity to speak with representatives from the boating and personal watercraft industry. Hear them discuss their positions and new technologies and play a role in finding solutions in Saturday's two-hour interactive discussion.

**Lakes and Livestock: The Agriculture/Water Connection** The impact of farming and phosphorus is considered by many to be a major menace to water quality. This stream will discuss the magnitude of the problem and explore solutions.

**The Price of Progress** Are we loving our lakes to death? The impacts of development is a critical issue to many lake communities. Investigate the true cost of development and methods to limit the consequences of our growing lake use.

**Panel Discussion: The Future of Mining in Wisconsin--Do Mining and Water Mix?** [Friday, 7:30-9:00 pm] Mining is making headlines in Wisconsin. This controversial issue has polarized many of us. Take this opportunity to hear the views of both sides of the issue in a panel discussion on the future of mining in Wisconsin. Representatives from every position will discuss mining and its influence on lakes and other waters.

**Visit the Exhibit Hall** to hear continuous presentations and "infomercials" from the many consultants and suppliers of lake products. New technologies, products and demonstrations will be presented throughout the Convention, and don't forget the Exhibitors Social and WAL Silent Auction on Friday evening!





## "Ashes to Ice Holes"

by Michael Dresen

*From time to time we here at "Lakes Central" are asked questions, the answers to which may be of interest to you. In this edition we're sharing two seasonal selections regarding... you guessed it... ashes and ice holes!*

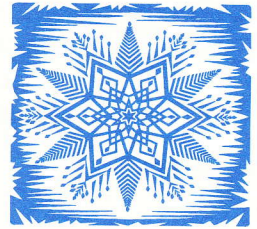
***Some folks make bonfires on the lake ice and leave the ashes. Is that legal and how does it affect our lake?***

As an old (let's say "former") Wisconsin Conservation Warden I remember ticketing miscreants for littering in our waters. The applicable state law [s.29.29(3), Stats.] goes like this: "No person may throw or deposit or permit to be thrown or deposited into any waters within the jurisdiction of the state any (hereon follows an interminable list of "deleterious substances") refuse...or waste material of any kind... or any other substance deleterious to game or fish life... Any person violating this paragraph shall forfeit not more than \$200. Each day of continuing violation is a separate offense (which could add up to big bucks)." So, the answer to the question in short... no, it's not legal. I suspect that if folks knew the effects of leaving ashes and other "deleterious substances" on the lake ice, they wouldn't do it. Ashes contain carbon particles, phosphorus, potassium and sometimes heavy metals and other compounds, depending on the fuel source. The carbon adds to lake turbidity and the nutrients help to fertilize nuisance algae and plant blooms. You veteran lake watchers know about the associated effects on lake oxygen supplies and fisheries as well as I do. Pass the information on to the bonfire afficianados and ice fishers among your acquaintances.

***Our lake district maintains aerators during the winter months and is required to fence off the open water for safety.***

***Who sets this rule and what are the guidelines?***

Here too our state laws rescue us from ourselves [s. 167.26, Stats.]. Those who remove or cause removal of ice from state waters have a duty to fence or barricade the open area. The statute provides very specific standards (not less than 2 by 4 inch posts with a fence board at least 3.5 ft. above the ice or colored plastic construction fencing). A special standard applies for sturgeon spearers on Lakes Butte des Morts, Poygan, Winnebago and Winneconne (at least 2 strips of wood 1.5 by 0.25 inches or less extending at least 3 ft. above the ice). Openings caused by aerators may be fenced in the usual manner described above or barricaded by uprights no greater than 25 ft. apart and connected by rope or cable 3.5 ft. above the ice and bearing reflectorized ribbon or tape. The barrier must be removed from waters immediately after ice-out. The statute also provides that persons who comply with marking or barricading requirements are not liable for damages suffered by persons who enter the marked area. Whew... that's a mouthful! Think I'll go out and check the specs on the aerator barrier near my home on Silver Lake.



### QUERY OF THE SEASON

***Submit your  
questions to [Lake  
Tides, Query of  
the Season.](#)***

### C A L E N D A R

**Feb. 9-10:** Project WET-Wisconsin Facilitator Training Workshop, Central Wisconsin Environmental Station, UW-Stevens Point. For more information contact Libby McCann, UWEX-Lakes Partnership, CNR-UWSP, Stevens Point WI 54481 (715/346-3366). Become a facilitator for Project WET!

**Feb. 10:** Natural Landscaping Conference, UW-Milwaukee. For more information, contact the Milwaukee Audubon Society (414/375-1565) PO Box 141 Cedarburg WI. \$25 fee includes lectures and exhibits from nurseries. Cure your cabin fever and bring spring a little early!

**March 7-9:** Wisconsin Lakes Convention, Stevens Point (see pages 5-8 for registration forms) or contact Dorothy Snyder, UWEX-Lakes Partnership, CNR-UWSP, Stevens Point WI 54481 (715/346-2116).

**May 26-30:** 39th Conference on Great Lakes Research, Erindale College, University of Toronto. For more information contact W. Gary Sprules, Erindale College, University of Toronto, Mississauga, ON L5L 1C6 (905/828-3987). Special sessions will cover a variety of current large lakes issues.





## Lake Tides - 8506

College of Natural Resources  
University of Wisconsin  
1900 Franklin St.  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715/346-2116

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 19  
Stevens Point, WI

Vol. 21, No. 1  
Winter 1996

### IN THIS ISSUE

Making Waves:  
Recreational Boating  
in the '90s.....1  
Proposed Legislation  
Affects Lakes.....3  
Lakes Needed for  
Milfoil Study.....3  
WAL Youth Fund...3  
Going Elsewhere to  
Swim: *Eleocharis*...4  
Wisconsin Lakes  
Convention.....5-8  
Query of the Season:  
Ashes to Iceholes....9  
Welcome to Our  
Trial Balloon-20th  
Anniversary.....10

\*\*\*\*\*5-DIGIT 54481  
39 525  
D0481403SN  
DOROTHY & MARTY SNYDER  
403 MCDILL AVE  
STEVENS POINT WI 54481-6219

Printed on recycled paper with soy ink.



## Welcome to Our Trial Balloon

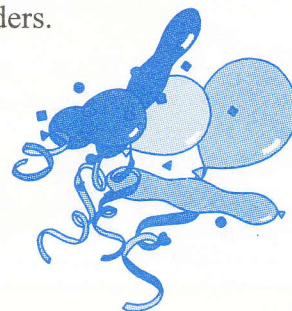
by Lowell Klessig

Twenty years ago *LakeTides* was launched on a trial basis under the heading: WELCOME TO OUR TRIAL BALLOON. Bob Sterrett and I weren't sure there would be enough interest from readers or that we would have enough time and money to continue the service. The response from readers to our first issue in 1975 was enthusiastic. And somehow we always found the time and money to continue the public service newsletter. Eventually, solid financial support was obtained from the state marine fuel tax, via the Department of Natural Resources.

Many factors play a role in bringing about success, and *Lake Tides* is no exception. Thank you to our readers, staff, and larkes partners for your encouragement and assistance throughout the years. As the awareness of the need to protect and preserve our remarkable lakes has grown, so has our readership. *Lake Tides* now serves over 16,000 readers.

The balloon is no longer entitled TRIAL.  
It now bears this message:

**20TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**



Published Quarterly

Editor: Robert Korth  
Assoc. Editor: Dorothy Snyder  
DNR Coordinator: Jo Temte  
Photography: R. Korth  
Artwork: Carol Watkins

The contents of *Lake Tides* do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of UW-Extension, UWSP-CNR or the Wisconsin DNR. Mention of trade names, commercial products, private businesses or publicly financed programs does not constitute endorsement. *Lake Tides* welcomes articles, letters or other news items for publication. Articles in *Lake Tides* may be reprinted or reproduced for further distribution with acknowledgment to the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership. If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact our office.